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1 August 1989

Notes on Preemption and Launch on Warning: comments on Clifford Johnson's Launch on Warning.

Johnson's discussion addresses the distinctions: LOW with, or without, a human in the loop; given a human decision, whether that human is:

--the President

--a military advisor to the President (in the President's office)

--the Vice President (was he added to the chain of command by Reagan, in honor of Bush?)

--the Secretary of Defense (in the civilian chain of command, rather than in the line of succession: a subordinate, rather than a successor)

--the Chairman of the JCS

Above comprise (?) the National Command Authorities in Washington.

--CINCSAC

--the CINCSAC delegate in the Looking Glass (brigadier general)

--other

--Congress, both houses: or a representative (needed, CJ thinks, for constitutionality).

----Why does it matter who makes the "decision"? Presumably the lower levels, particularly military, would be more likely to "go by the book," give programmed responses; though a President or Vice President, unfamiliar with the drill, the meaning of the signals, their origins and analysis, and the options, might actually be more confused, uncertaint, and prone to follow recommendations.

More importantly, the decision-makers will differ in the importance they see to preempting for the purpose of damage-limiting, and perhaps to the value of "prevailing" in military terms in the post-attack period. If the warning occurs during a crisis, they will differ in the attention they have given up to that moment to the possible value of preempting. The President and probably--though not always--the civilian Secretary of Defense are likely to give very much less weight to the benefits of going first

than the military. And a Chairman from the Army, and perhaps the Navy, is likely to give very much less weight to this than one from the Air Force.

This will affect their "critical risk": how sure they have to be that the tactical warning signal is valid before they act on it by launching irreversible forces. I would not have wanted to see Weinberger tested on this; and perhaps not Bush (given his earlier interview responses to Scheer). But McNamara and Kennedy would almost surely not have given execute orders on the basis of electronic warning. Nor Generals Taylor or Wheeler. Nor Admiral Crowe.

But General Twining or Admiral Radford! They would have been as quick to "confirm" an attack as U.S. Sharp was to "confirm" the North Vietnamese attack on our destroyers in the Tonkin Gulf.

-----CJ makes the point that there is only a marginal difference between a totally automated "decision" and a very rapid process in which a human--whether an unpracticed President, a high military man, or some lower subordinate--"chooses" under extreme time and responsibility pressure on the basis of computerized inputs and perhaps recommendations: basically running through a checklist of considerations, a program.

A human, especially Pres or SecDef, can still say No. (But does CJ address the question, as does Steinbrunner, whether he will be <u>obeyed</u> if he makes this choice? See the real reasons why military wants no high-level control after the initial GO,and no absolute physical control. See the lack of PALs at sea; and the lack of exclusively civilian enabling codes.

Their "bad examples": "over-control" by civilians in Vietnam; and no doubt, in Cuba II; and certainly (Bissell) in Cuba I.

--CJ points out (summary) that the "desperately rapid response required to launch on warning is neither necessary" (nor constitutional, he goes on to say: dubiously, in terms of current constitutional interpretation). This is true, for Type I deterrence. Both LOW and preemption reflect goals of prevailing (which, they claim, is necessary for deterrence: but this is silly) and for damage-limiting.

To say the latter are necessary for deterrence or even contribute markedly is to say that a coercive strategy could otherwise appear very reliable. Nitze and the CPD did suggest that in the late '70's; but it is basically silly.

The most that can be claimed for these goals is that they are worth pursuing <u>given</u> certain weapons on both sides--or if one

imagined that the other's weapons programs are totally independent of one's own and cannot be moderated by any agreements, at least to abandon such goals. But the latter supposition is absurd--especially under Gorbachev--and has almost surely always been wrong; and the short-run context is the wrong framework in which to consider possible agreements, and weapons choices.

Nor is counterforce clearly the best approach to damage-limiting even in the operational short-run, still less decapitation, compared to coercion or total or near-total withholding. Contrary to CJ's assumptions about my contribution and the SIOPs after 1962, I doubt if coercion ever entered much into SAC or JCS thinking, especially after 1970.

Thus, the reason that LOW might someday be automated, especially during a crisis (high alert), or delegated to subordinate commanders, or considered by the President in a crisis, or why preemption might be considered prior to tactical warning, is the prospect of damage-limiting (and possibly prevailing): coming out better after the war than if one waited.

These procedures or automations are not instituted in order to achieve deterrence of surprise attack (though a known capability for such fast response would add to the deterrence of that, if any addition were needed; and it may compensate somewhat for the impetus that the same first-strike capabilities give to the opponent's preemption--this will be needed in a crisis, yet it probably won't fully compensate!).

I.e., LOW and preemption are not needed for Type I deterrence, and that is not their primary function. Their function is to "hedge" or "insure" against the possibility that Type I deterrence will fail and that central war does occur: though unfortunately this type of "insurance" makes that possibility more likely: to a degree that may easily, and probably does, outweigh any benefit that the capabilities might achieve.

This was probably not true in 1960-61, when Marshall, Goldhammer, Kaufmann, and AJW and HK were first working on these notions. But it has almost surely been true since the mid-Seventies, still more in the Nineties.

It is not technology--the vulnerability of our own land-based missiles and C3 and NCA, plus the capability for rapid "decision" and response--plus the requirement of Type I deterrence, that presses us toward a LOWC (Launch on Warning capability). Type I deterrence does not depend on the survival of our land-based missile force (that is not true even for the Soviets' Type I deterrence) or C3, beyond the most rudimentary.

It is, rather, the combination of the goal of damage-limiting, along with the combination of vulnerability of our C3 and missiles

and the vulnerability of Soviet missiles and C3 (and the Soviet goal of damage-limiting, too!) that creates the incentive or "necessity" for LOW and, for that matter, the incentive to preempt, on both sides.

If one side gives up this goal, it can give up LOW and preemption: which not only makes it less likely to initiate war on a false alarm or uncertain warning, but makes its opponent less likely to do so--because it will be less likely to form an expectation of attackthat is higher than its critical risk--even in a crisis, and even if its does not give up its capability or its goal of damage-limitation.

Thus the overall expectation of damage will go down for the side that foregoes the goal and preparations for LOW or preemption (and for the other). Moreover, even inthe short run, its actual expectation of damage in the event of war will probably not be affected much (realistically).

Still more, if this frees it to make "offers the other side cannot refuse " to reduce armaments--asymmetric offers "favorable" to the other--this may limit damage in the event of war far more than any other method.

Even without agreement, "opting out of the arms race" may reduce the budget allocations of the opponent as much or more than an arms agreement. (See the effects this month of Gorbachev's overtures on budgetting for the MX, Midgetman, Stealth and SDI!)

Mere proposals, in the past, rarely had this effect (in the absence of agreements, which the US could block). But Gorbachev's combination of approaches--unilateral measures, glasnost, conciliation at home and in Eastern Europe--together are having the effect of the sun on Aesop's traveller with the cloak, versus the wind.

(Whereas Israel's tough policy, of kidnapping an Iranian cleric and "terrorist" in Lebanon a few days ago, is no longer looking so "daring, competent," a cause for "admiration in private." 1 August 1989: the day after Higgins was hanged.)

p. 5: note Sen. Nunn's question in April 1983 as to whether "launch under attack is now acceptable." General Davis, CINCSAC: "Let me characterize it as prompt response." Did Nunn really believe there was ever a time when it was not "acceptable"?

All that (probably) remains to be implemented is fully automated response, for which a capability probably exists, waiting to be switched on. But the Executive, especially the military, deliberately tries to convey to the Congress and public that this is a mere capability with which to worry the Soviets, thereby contributing to Type I deterrence, not one that would ever be

switched on, as are the fully implemented capabilities to preempt or to decide on launch on warning.

All these merely contribute, supposedly, to the Soviets' sense of uncertainty or ambiguity: they are bluffs. This implication is like the impression the Executive gives of capabilities for first-use of tactical weapons, or of escalation.

There is, however, a difference. A bluff-threat to go first with tactical weapons does not strongly press the opponent to preempt; especially, if the threat is made against a non-nuclear power, it does not tempt the nuclear ally of that opponent to preempt. That might not be the case with this strategic "bluff." The prospect of US preemption, or of a possible US false alarm during a crisis, gives an incentive to preempt

CJ might make his point as follows: within the time constraint and pressure associated with a true LOW, even humans "in the loop" must, in effect, simulate computers. Their use of their minds (and hearts) must simulate Artificial Intelligence. An LOW decision--within the 8-30 minutes available--must be "quasi-automated" even if humans are involved. (Of course, there are some advantages to humans in the system--as in fighter planes--even when decisions must be very fast. But it can be argued that much "humanness" is lost, or programmed out, in this situation.)

p.7: All the inputs to the decision must come from computers, AI (i.e., all the inputs based on sensor warnings); moreover, AI will surely also recommend a response (as well as execute it). But is it guaranteed, as CJ says, that "AI's conclusions hold final sway," Notwithstanding people in the loop"?

After all, as the Pentagon Papers showed, Presidents do override their bureaucracy, regularly, much more than the BPM approach imagines. (But, CJ might ask, will the decision-makers--almost surely military--below the level of President or SecDef choose to do so, in the minutes available?)

As a former SAC analyst CJ cites puts it, SAC "is the largest producer of automated humans in the free world." (8). Humans who operate according to checklists, without emotion and without taking account of any other information they may have. (However, this same operator did put "operator intuition" on his checklist, and the SAC inspectors never complained, since reading his checklist was not on their checklist; this does provide at least one counter-example to CJ's generalization).

In the SDI situation, quasi-automation doesn't seem adequate: full automation would seem essential. (Even an override capability would have to involve very low-level humans).

Likewise, the few minutes available to deal with a threat to the NCAs by subs (or, in Moscow, from Pershing II, when that existed) scarcely permit participation by high-level military, let alone civilians.

CJ should consider the implications of the "pop-up X-ray laser" (see my memo).

--p. 8: Ashton Carter discusses the psychological effects of an LUA capability, in suggesting or hinting that LOW or even preemption is also acceptable, or has become so. Is AC, like Nunn above, unaware that no hints are necessary? An inclination, even assumption, of preemption has been characteristic of SAC planning "from the beginning."

--p. 8: Ikle and others argued that SDI would preclude the need for (automated) LOW, with its dangers. <u>But SDI itself would have to be automated!</u>

--13. "Concerned establishment strategists, e.g. the Nunn-Warner group, trim the SIOP (?) but neglect to amputate the sick limb that now risks all, namely, the set of launch on warning options."

[CJ may assume, like Carter above, that it is the existence of LOW/LUA options that "suggests" and nudges the system toward LOW and preemption. But he ignores the damage-limiting consideration--and the escalation options (e.g. in Europe)--which actually favor preemption in any case. <u>Even if literal LOW were ruled out, by his 30-minute hold condition, most of the dangers and stimulus to the arms race would remain.</u>

SAC planners and JCS do <u>not</u>, indeed, expect ever to launch on literal tactical sensor warning--nor would they really want to. But that is not because they would prefer, or because they plan or intend, to "ride out" the initial attack, or wait until confirmed detonations have occurred. (This the public is led to believe."

Rather, it is because they expect to go to central war by way of "preemption," if they ever do. That is their hope, plan, intention, if they ever have to go to central war, and it always has been. If they were ever challenged to launch on tactical warning, "they would have failed," as they say. But it is not only "deterrence" that would have failed ("Peace Is Our Profession") but their plans and preparations for preemption would have failed to be ordered and executed. ("...and if not Peace, Preemption...not 'Retaliation <u>After</u> Attack'"

SAC prepares for Preemptive War, primarily; that is what our strategic forces are oriented toward (even the Navy, with D5), not retaliation.

Our "Triad" is not needed to provide redundancy of retaliatory capability for deterrence of surprise attack. Most of the Air Force missiles and bombers are for preemptive damage-limiting; so is the Navy D5. So is SDI. (Exceptions: C4, maybe the B-52, the Minuteman II).

14: A "problem" with my coercive strategy, for second-strike damage-limiting: "No cities." The Soviets chose to put their ICBM fields near urban areas, even near Moscow. (See Ball). Of course, I could not foresee this in 1961, before they <u>had</u> any ICBM fields! Nor should they have foreseen, from SAC doctrine, the emergence of city-avoidance as a possibility. (What <u>did</u> they make of the Ann Arbor speech?! ASK SOVIETS.

In effect, they followed a strategy that some RAND analysts imagined as a Western option, assuming superior SU forces possibly using a coercive strategy: put your ICBMs in the middle of cities, thus precluding the first-strike coercive strategy projected by Nitze and CPD in the late Seventies.

Another problem: the "footprint" of MIRVd missiles.

--15: Dan Rather, May 1982, queries whether Weinberger thinks we should have a capability for LUA....presumably vs. a determination to "ride out" at least the first detonations of an attack, rather than to launch, <u>ever,</u> on the ambiguous indications available from sensors alone, prior to detonation.

Again, this shows naivete: as if we expected and planned to use our nuclear missiles <u>only</u> after an attack had hit the US or was unequivocally <u>about</u> to, in minutes (with the latter contingency plan being controversial).

Actually, the desirability of the latter capability is not controversial within the Executive branch, with the military assuming that it should be used, if necessary, rather than to wait for actual detonation. More importantly, the military presumes that actual launch of US missiles certainly should be, and almost surely would be, preemptive, prior to tactical sensor warning.

Our strategic objectives, including damge-limiting (and more ambitiously, prevailing), and our plans and preparations, put an enormous premium on preempting, thereby destroying enemy forces and command networks before enemy missiles are launched.

LOW is a distant second-best as a way of commencing US strategic nuclear operations; LUA/LOI (Launch under attack/Launch on impact, i.e., after confirmed detonations) is a distant third. "Riding out" a large attack is virtually out of the question, in the eyes of the military.

The "riding out" notion is part of our declaratory policy, to fool and reassure the public, and to drive up the requirements for certain forces and to provide a cover explanation for others.

It could only be imagined as a result of a complete breakdown of C3 and warning systems, or perhaps a horrible, but imaginable, failure of nerve by civilian leadership, which somehow survived long enough to delay the military response tragically, as the Tsar almost managed to avert Russian general mobilization in WWI. (Had he succeeded, there might have been no WWI).

CJ's judgment that preemption--i.e., attacking on "strategic warning," even more ambiguous than tactical sensor warning--could never be acceptable, assumes that the assuring retaliation for purposes of deterrence is the only function of the forces. This function should be executed, he argues plausibly, only upon confirmation of actual large-scale attack by human witnesses. His point is that deterrence does not require earlier response than this, and that anything else risks "mistaken" US attack.

He ignores the real function of the forces "in the event of war," which is damage-limiting. For this, preemption has an immense advantage over LOW, still more over LOI.

--Why, after all, is there such an effort to achieve "prompt response"? The reason given to the public is to assure an enemy that his attack will not destroy any, or many, of our retaliatory vehicles before they are launched. Thus, he will face retaliation by our full force, maximising deterrence.

But the US force is so large that even a small fraction of it can threaten retaliation that should provide maximum deterrence, or close to it. And this has always been true, relative to the offensive capabilities of the Soviet Union.

Nor should the deterrent power depend on the retaliation coming "promptly" or being highly coordinated; so the survival of centralised command and control isn't critical to deterrence either.

The motives for prompt response, in truth, have relatively little to do with deterrence. An exception would be if there were reason to suppose, in terms of the relative capabilities of the two sides, that a coercive strategy could be fairly reliable in deterring any response to a counterforce first strike.

Another counterexample would be the supposition that decapitation could paralyse any response. But to counter this hope, LOW would have to be executed in the 8 minutes or less before sub-launched missiles might hit National Command Authorities or the 15 minutes before they destroyed the Looking Glass CP.)

Thus, aside from these two cases, an LOWC is not needed for deterrence of "preventive war," an out-of-the-blue attack. But what of deterring preemptive attack, or LOW? With respect to both of these, an LOWC works in two, opposite ways. It does reduce the expected advantage of striking first, and thus raises the critical risk for the opponent, "slowing down" his instinct to launch on uncertain warning.

But it also amplifies the effect of other warning evidence, increasing the opponent's estimate of the likelihood that he is or soon will be under attack. The LOWC may either, on balance, serve to enhance or reduce deterrence of attack-on-warning.

Perhaps it is too strong to say that the advocacy of an LOWC has "nothing to do" with deterrence. This is so especially when we take account of the belief--which I think is mainly rationalisation, but may be sincerely held by some--that the Soviets are mainly deterred by the prospect of "defeat" in terms of a military balance or the destruction of their forces and command capability, or would be significantly more sure of a massive US response if the US could hope to prevail or limit damage by responding.

Nevertheless the primary incentive for "prompt response" is the ability to destroy, before launch, Soviet forces that can be presumed not to have been deliberately or successfully launched in the first wave of a Soviet attack. This depends on the deployment, real readiness, and vulnerability to US forces of various elements of Soviet strategic forces.

It depends in particular on <u>Soviet</u> vulnerability. In this context, US vulnerability matters because the destruction of certain US forces deprives the US of some ability to limit damage by destroying Soviet forces, not because it limits the US ability to retaliate on a scale that assures maximum achieveable deterrence.

If the threatened targets were only Soviet cities, there would be no strong incentive for "prompt response," for preemption or LOW.

But given the targetting of soft, hard and mobile Soviet forces and C3 for purposes of damage-limiting and prevailing, then the same incentives that encourage a LOWC and actual LOW, encourage even more a counterforce attack in conditions of crisis <u>before</u> enemy forces are launched, i.e. preemption.

There is this difference: in the case of possible preemption, there is somewhat less time pressure. That means a greater likelihood that the President will be located and included in the decision-making; perhaps a near-certainty of this. Moreover, the President will have more than minutes to decide, and to consult

others. This involvement of highest political, civilian authorities, with some small time for reflection, does significantly reduce the likelihood of a decision to launch.

(However, such a conference, not ending in a launch decision, is likely greatly to increase the likelihood that subsequent ambiguous tactical warning will lead to a launch decision; it will not only strengthen the inference that an enemy attack is underway, but will increase the sensitivity of top decisionmakers to the advantages--perceived by the military--of striking first. Such a discussion with the President might leave the system "cocked," even if the President was included in a subsequent consideration of tactical warning.)

There could remain a difference in attitude between the President and members of Congress. History suggests this could go either way. Kennedy, or Carter, were probably considerably less hawkish than some senior Committee Chairmen they faced. For that matter--again, with respect to intervention--the JCS in the Eighties were consistently less hawkish than the civilians at the top of the Reagan Administration.

In any case, the President is at present unlikely to consult leading members of Congress on the issue of preemption, <u>even when there is time to do so, as there might well be.</u> This may be CJ's strongest constitutional point. Jeremy Stone and FAS have made the same point with respect to tactical first use (<u>not</u> preemption), where the case is even stronger.

(August 3): It is significant that LOW--which concerns CJ almost to the exlusion of concern over preemption--does limit the circle of decision-makers to those, mainly military, largely second-level or below, most likely to decide to launch in the face of ambiguous evidence, compared to the President or civilian advisors or Congress. In this sense, the possibly increasing preparations for LOW on both sides are a source of increasing danger.

However, my own emphasis on preemption as a possibility reflects my belief that a decision to initiate strategic operations does <u>not require</u>--i.e., may well occur <u>without</u>:

--literal automation of response

--quasi-automation of response: i.e., only low- or intermediate-level military human "decision-making," or an absence of real decision-making or human judgement, only programmed responses based on a checklist, with no provision for veto based on "intuition, instinct, personal value judgment."

--purely military judgment, especially military below highest-level advisors: i.e., an absence of Presidential participation or command.

--full Presidential understanding, conviction of the desirability of preempting, eagerness or lack of reluctance to preempt, fear/horror/anguish/dispair...or even Presidential consent to preemption, or participation (in other words, in contrast to the previous point, the President may be manipulated, disobyed or bypassed: even when time is amply available to consult him);

--a time restriction for decision limited to 5-45 minutes.

--subjective certainty or near-certainty that an enemy strategic strike will occur within minutes or hours.

It is a common assumption--almost never explicit, perhaps seldom conscious--that the last condition is necessary to get US forces launched irreversibly. This carries with it the tacit, unexamined inference that tactical warning from early warning sensors is essential, or "almost essential" to a decision to launch missiles in the absence of confirmed nuclear detonations on US or allied forces or territory, since it is assumed that this is "almost" the only sort of evidence that could lead to such conviction.

It would follow that a US launch prior to nuclear detonations on the US or its allies could arise only in two cases: the Soviets have launched nuclear missiles against the US; or electronic and infrared sensors or computerized reporting channels have portrayed the thoroughly convincing--but false, mistaken--impression that the Soviets were attacking the US. Hence the description of the latter case as "mistaken" or "miscalculated" or "inadvertent, accidental" war, arising out of sensor/computer/warning-system "error" or breakdown.

But if, as I believe, the goal of damage-limiting and the elaborate, decades-long preparations to implement this goal in wartime can lead to a decision to preempt even when enemy attack is not seen as literally certain and inevitable within minutes or hours--on the basis of fear that the enemy may strike first within hours or a few days, a suspicion that is not small but is less than certain--then preemption is a real possibility, as distinct from (and in addition to) Launch on Warning.

If assurance of retaliation were the only operational aim, deterrence of nuclear attack being the only relevant goal, there would never be any reason to preempt, so long as Launch on Warning were possible. (Neither would there be a need for Launch on Warning, so long as adequate forces would be certain to survive attack).

To assure deterrence, there would be no need to hint at or prepare for the possibility of launching on strategic warning, and in the event of such warning--no matter how "certain" it appeared to be--there would be no incentive to launch prior to receiving confirmation of actual enemy launch by sensors.

But in pursuit of damage-limitation, there is an incentive to Launch on (tactical) Warning, even if survivable forces such as submarines are more than adequate to provide deterrence and even if the tactical warning appears less than completely certain. Moreover, there is an incentive to launch even earlier, in the absence of tactical warning false or true, on the basis of "strategic warning" of possible or probable enemy attack "soon," even when evidence and conclusions do not point to enemy attack either certainly or immediately.

(The enemy need not even be presumed to intend or expect to attack, as of this moment; but a course of events is in progress--including some actions one is about to take--which seems likely, though not certain, to bring him to that decision in a few hours or days).

This is a state of mind that can arise earlier than and in addition to any cases of "mistaken" tactical warning. The inference that it could--given damage limitation capabilities and aims--lead to preemption broadens the set of circumstances under which missiles might actually be launched by deliberate Presidential or high-level military decision.

Moreover, to say that subjective certainty is not required for Launch on Tactical Warning is to broaden this set very significantly, since evidence that points to a considerable likelihood of enemy attack while remaining somewhat ambiguous, contradictory, incomplete and "uncertain" is very much more common--in the absence of an actual attack--than evidence that appears (falsely) "unequivocal."

The latter sort of false alarm--which is what the term "mistake" usually suggests--is also possible and remains a problem; but it would be joined as a possible source of a US-initiated strategic war by a large set of circumstances in which evidence was recognized to be more ambiguous, yet which might lead either to Launch on Warning or to preemption.

Certain Presidents might be sufficiently in line with Air Force thinking on these matters to make such a decision willingly, on due reflection, given certain types of "strategic warning," and still more if this were followed by ambiguous tactical warning. George Bush might even be such a president, judging from his sponsorship of "Team B" as CIA Director under Ford and his assertion in an interview with Robert Scheer of "Team B"-like attitudes on the possibility of "winning" a nuclear war.

But in any serious crises that arise while strategic postures on both sides reflect a generation of the pursuit of damage-limiting capabilities, there will be very committed, high-level military--and some civilian--advocates of preemption, if nuclear war should come to seem fairly likely: somewhat more likely, let us say, than in any past crisis.

Any President in that context would be confronting extremely urgent, authoritative recommendations and requests from high-level military advisors and commanders who would be convinced of the supreme moral as well as practical necessity to choose among uncertain prospects of differing levels of catastrophe and to act decisively to avert the worst.

A long and generally reliable tradition of civilian control in the US would not necessarily stand up to this conscientious pressure, even if the President was not, in his heart, convinced that his military advisors were right.

A confused, fearful, tired and unconfident President--not an unlikely situation after days and nights of crisis--could give way to what would be in certain circumstances predictably very intense pressure to use, not in hope but in desperation, the military capabilities which the US has spent a trillion dollars or so to acquire.

And if he did not, his rejection might be ignored, disobyed. It would not be a violation for which his commanders would expect to be fired or court-martialed; few of them would expect to survive it for long. They would act in the fatalistic belief that by doing so they might be saving scores of millions of American lives.

They would feel confident, as patriotic and loyal officers, that they were doing what the President should have chosen to do, even if they had to do it against his "fearful, uninformed" wishes, even if they had to bring it about behind his back: a form of coup.

If they did not immediately go that far, in face of the President's temporizing, the next ambiguous warning that arrived during the crisis might be unusually likely to be "confirmed" by high military authority. And to paraphrase McGeorge Bundy, such warnings are like Pleikus.

(For short memories: after the VC attack on American advisors and air at Pleiku had convinced an apparently reluctant and vacillating President that the time had come to accept the urgent recommendations of his top military and civilian advisors to start steady bombing of North Vietnam, Bundy remarked, "Pleikus are like streetcars").

I am not suggesting, and do not believe, that American military and civilian officials have been or would be looking for an excuse, either in peacetime or in the context of crises no more desperate than we have yet experienced, to launch WWIII by a preemptive US attack.

I am saying that a few steps up the escalation ladder from where we have actually been more than once in confrontations, high-level military officers, desperately choosing to avoid what they saw as a greater evil--faced with a President who was proving incapable of facing up to that anguishing responsibility --could "confirm" ambiguous warning of nuclear attack.

They might find themselves doing it as unequivocally as Admiral Ulysses S. Grant Sharp, CINCPAC, "confirmed" for LBJ the reality of a (non-existent) North Vietnamese PT boat attack on an American destroyer in the Tonkin Gulf on the night of August 4, 1964, twenty-five years ago this week. The bombing that false assessment started was non-nuclear, but there was 7-1/2 million tons of it: the explosive equivalent of a Nagasaki bomb a week, for seven and a half years.

(If the President's approval is thought to be essential and the necessary warning "streetcar" didn't arrive during the crisis, it would not be difficult to create one. The 1979 false alarm--see CJ p. 55--suggests a possible scenario. It would not seem too hard for a staff officer of the JCS or SAC or NORAD <u>deliberately</u> to insert a comprehensive exercise tape simulating Soviet attack into the system--as happened then "by mistake"--with measures to prevent its discovery for 20 minutes or so.

Does this seem impossibly "conspiratorial"? There is sworn testimony by an ex-CIA officer, and supporting evidence, that a key part of the plan for the Bay of Pigs was to be a landing near Guantanamo and an attack on that American base by CIA-managed Cuban emigres disguised as Castro troops. This "attack" was to be used to ensure that President Kennedy would reverse his ban on US naval air support over Cuba, "to protect Guantanamo" and the Bay of Pigs landing. (The "contra" unit assigned to this ran into a Castro patrol and retreated to its boats without carrying out its mission. Kennedy maintained his ban, and the contras at the Bay of Pigs were captured.)

To sum this up, I am saying that in a world where both superpowers are thoroughly deterred from contemplating a first strike during peacetime or in non-nuclear confrontations of the level we have experienced--the world we live in--World War III may still come about, and in more ways than is suggested by the term "accident" or "mistake."

To trigger it, especially during a major crisis, does not <u>require</u> a failure of the warning system in the form of

"unequivocal" but false warnings of enemy attack, or even any tactical warning of ongoing attack at all. Circumstances that might bring it about are considerably more various and more likely than either of those not-unlikely stimuli.

Measures to limit damage and to "prevail" --by "prompt action, taking the initiative"--during an "unavoidable" nuclear war are thus crucial to making a nuclear war, as an outcome of crisis confrontation, appear, and become, "unavoidable."
(End August 3 section: following from Aug.2)

What I am pointing toward is the importance of eschewing--for practical purposes, by agreement with the Soviets--damage-limiting capabilities and aims, especially those that rely on or encourage "prompt response" or preemption and counterforce attacks on hard or mobile forces or command posts, for the same reasons that it is desirable to agree mutually to forego SDI.

The argument for mutually foregoing first-use in Europe is similar. Again, it is important not merely to change the declaratory doctrine (in plans and training, along with public statements) or to impose a time-delay on decisions or to demand broader consultation, but to <u>eliminate the forces</u> in question, which both encourage a counterforce use and which invite attack.

Consider what it is one is foregoing in any of these cases. The chance that first-use would be advantageous against a nuclear-armed opponent--i.e., that the opponent would make no nuclear reply, or that an exchange would lead to a better outcome than if there had been no first-use--is about as large as the chance that a superpower would meaningfully survive a first-strike, i.e., that counterforce, perhaps with SDI, would so limit retaliatory damage as to allow a "successful" outcome for a first strike.

Perhaps more significantly, one is giving up the threat of each of these. One must look hard at how much such threats are <u>needed</u>; because their benefits must be weighed, not only against the enormous budgetary costs of such threat-capabilities but against their effects in making large wars more likely in the event of crises or smaller wars. (The latter may be made somewhat less frequent, by the existence of such threat-capabilities, but will not be eliminated).

CJ ignores damage-limiting function/goal:
26 ("Nuclear retaliation is assured...Conclusively, there is no overriding military necessity for the desperate launch on warning hair-trigger, except from the myopic perspective of Air Force officers whose traditons understandably...vaunt maximum readiness."

--28. "From the Air Force's cultishly pursued provincial interests has arisen the incalculable risk of launch on warning."

--48 "The bottom-line rationale for the present LOWC is that the consequent increase in the risk of inadvertent nuclear war with it is less worrisome than would be the risk of a Soviet first-strike or preemption without it."

But this ignores some of the worst effects of the damage-limiting capability which the LOWC reflects and of which it is part. At the same time, it ignores what is thought to be the main benefit of the LOWC, which is that in addition to whatever effect it may have on the risk of a Soviet FS, it supposedly radically reduces the damage that could be inflicted by such a strike.

(see Gen. Davis quote on p. 32: "I do not think anyone has ever seriously defined ride out as riding out a complete attack. That would be suicidal..." (he completes the sentence, "so a prompt response on the part of the United States...is what deters.")

But these same damage-limiting capabilities, which point even more toward preemption if possible, incline the Soviets toward preemption or LOW in a crisis, despite the fact that they face retaliation from US subs. To be sure, their lack of ASW must make preemption look less rewarding to them than it might come to look to the US, and thereby the Soviets might be more willing than the US to give up the damage-limiting goal, especially mutually. (I wouldn't really have thought this possible--given their emphasis on defending the SU, after WWII--till I saw the radical changes in doctrine for ground war in Europe).

Nevertheless, CJ's judgment that "Of course, the likelihood of a Soviet first-strike even without the LOWC is negligible because of the United States naval deterrent..." is unreliable as it relates to Soviet preemption (mentioned in the previous sentence). But the main point is that the LOWC does not reliably reduce the risk of Soviet preemption; on the contrary, the damage-limiting project and capabilities of which it is part increase the likelihood of Soviet preemption, by causing the Soviets to fear the prospect of a US first strike, either preemptive, escalatory or a mistaken LOW.

The damage-limiting benefits, whatever they may be, are purchased at the cost of this increased risk, not only of (1) US inadvertent war (or perhaps (2) US preemption) but of increased risk of (3) Soviet preemptive or (4) mistaken LOW first strike. Moreover, the drive to acquire these capabilities prolongs an arms race in which more threatening Soviet capabilities, as well as US', are acquired.

Compared to the drastic arms reductions that might be achieved if both sides agreed to forego counterforce damage limitation and "prompt" response capabilities, the pursuit of D-L capabilities greatly increases the damage to be expected in a central war, whether from a first strike or from retaliation.

At least, it greatly increases the number of warheads that could be delivered on oneself. The effective damage might be about the same, the difference between the two approaches being more in the vastly different costs and in the above risks. And in one more dimension: the arms race supports and requires a Cold War environment in which superpower crises and conflicts are much more likely, while the D-L capabilities that largely drive the arms race make these crises more dangerous.

Of course, damage-limiting capability (i.e., preemptive counterforce and decapitation) are not desired only for the benefits they might achieve in the event of war: though (contrary to the impression I may have given in my previous writings and interviews) that may be the main or even only focus of many of the analysts and planners working on such capabilities at places like RAND and the Air Staff.

For strategists the main purpose of strengthening damage-limiting capability may be--other than to support Air Force budget requests against the Navy and against civilian purposes--to pose the <u>threat</u> of preemptive attack (and even the threat of <u>mistaken</u> LOW during a crisis) and the threat of an <u>escalatory</u> first strike, both backing up threats of first-use and escalation.

A separate goal of such threats is to "strain" the Soviet economy by pressing them to counter such capabilities, or to imitate them in pursuit of parity.

--Having a D-L capability--and in particular, having a LOW capability, combined with D-L capability--has the risks of keeping a loaded gun in the house. (Overwhelmingly likely to lead to wrongful death, unnecessary death, and death of oneself and one's relatives, compared to intended deterrence or successful self-defense). Moreover, it increases the likelihood that "intruders" will be similarly armed, with hair-trigger pistols, and the likelihood that they will use them.

--55. CJ asks, "Is one gang more or less inclined to start a likely suicidal shootout with a hostile gang when its leaders are threatened by cocked guns, or when they are not so threatened?"

Well, the answer to that does not seem clear. A better analogy and question: Is a fight less or more likely to break out between two armed gangs, when <u>both</u> are pointing cocked pistols, or when neither are?

--To say that a damage-limiting, war-fighting, prevailing capability is necessary to "deterrence" is very dubious, where Type I Deterrence is implied (deterrence of nuclear attack on the US).

But the same people who say this put great value on another sort of deterrence, Type II or "extended deterrence" based on the threat of escalation or first-strike. And for extended deterrence, D-L capability is essential.

Moreover, it is in the exercise of Type II deterrence--the active threatening of a US first strike, or escalation (commencing with actual first use)--that the greatest possible strain is put on type I deterrence. If a capability to prevail militarily is attainable, and if it would add to type I deterrence, it would seem desirable to have this increment, precisely in the eyes of those who advocate making first-strike threats. They tend to ignore the fact that this particular way of strengthening Type I--increasing US ability to limit damage and to prevail--almost surely increases Soviet fear of a US first strike, and thus strains or reduces US Type I deterrence.

It does so as it encourages the Soviet Union to use its own preemptive damage-limiting capability (limited as that is) in an intense crisis; or forces it to switch on its own LOW capability; and enhances the effect of ambiguous warning, making mistaken LOW more likely. Thus its effect on deterrence is ambivalent and ambiguous at best, at worst counter-productive.

(One reason for the goal or criterion of "prevailing"--aside from its seemingly traditional military importance--in addition to that of damage-limitation may be that it is very difficult to persuade oneself that one's best efforts will succeed in limiting damage meaningfully, in the present strategic context.

The notion of "prevailing," on the other hand, is hard to define. It encourages a staff to limit attention to rather arbitrary indices--e.g. ratios of residual forces--that are very narrow and/or highly speculative, in terms of which "prevailing" in this technical sense might actually seem attainable in a nuclear war.

The basic silliness of this is not well concealed; but it can still be hoped that the enemy will be deterred by this "perception," or its perception of our perception: if it can be made to worry that some of our decision-makers might take this seriously.

--It may be that the very worst effect of the pursuit of damage-limitation, prevailing, and the use of FU/escalation/first strike threats is that it leads both sides toward LOW policies in crises: and thus inescapably produces, maintains, enhances, a risk of nuclear war triggered by sensor or computer warning of attack (in the absence of an actual attack).

There is a little-recognized terminological problem here. Such a warning cannot be called "mistaken" unless it appears near-

certain, or at least highly likely. If a launch decision is made on what is understood to be ambiguous warning, neither the warning nor the decision based on it necessarily merit the description of being "mistaken" or an "error." The decision is a conscious gamble, conceivably a prudent one in view of the stakes. Or it may, on the other hand, have been a programmed response to signals, rather than a free and "rational choice."

See the sequence of decisions that led to World War I, for elements of either interpretation. Or the Tonkin Gulf "reprisal." Or the Soviet decision to shoot down the KAL-007; or that of the Vincennes! (Tonight, 2 August 1989, ABC evening news reported that a jury has awarded damages to victims of KAL-007, i.e. their families, on the grounds that the Korean crew had wilfully and wrongfully entered Soviet airspace).

--The same pursuits, capabilities and threats may lead to preemption, i.e., deliberate initiation of attacks prior to tactical warning from sensors. The military, compared to high civilian politicians, are much more likely to be concerned about "prevailing" in various arbitrary senses, and to be impressed by the differences in levels of catastrophe associated with "limiting damage" in attainable ways.

Could it be that the military promote the looseness of control in the system necessary for LOW, so as to preserve an effective ability to preempt: <u>if necessary, against the judgment and wishes of the President and civilian advisors</u>? (The President does not control enabling codes, as opposed to authentication codes; and there are no PALs at all on Navy ships).

August 3----------

--The existence of a LOWC (Launch on Warning Capability) has clearly become more dangerous as the warning time has shortened: particularly as Soviet subs have come to be operated routinely offshore Washington, D.C. (Was this a result of stationing Pershings in Europe in 1983? Could Gorbachev formally reverse this now?) The time would be even shorter with SDI.

--For the same reason, some see the LOWC as more necessary. I may have underestimated--before this week, and earlier in these same notes--the perceived contribution of an LOWC to Type I deterrence, with respect to the threat of decapitation.

This is the rationale that Weinberger's representative gives the Ninth Circuit Court in response to CJ's suit: p. 96. "Weinberger" says that what CJ is saying, in his complaint, is "That a submarine-lauanched missile laying off of Washington, D.C. would lob a missile in, it would impact in three minutes this year, maybe 90 seconds next year, and that the constitution would prevent the executive and the legislative from working together to guild some sort of a capability which might at least give rise to a

consideration on the part of hostile foreign powers that the United States nevertheless could respond to this so-called decapitation type of attack. That's the plaintiff's theory."

Of course, 90 seconds to three minutes doesn't really allow for any human to participate in a decision to respond: response would have to be automated unless (more likely) it followed the attack on Washington, in which case it would have to be made by a lower-level officer, say in Looking Glass.

The implication is the minds of foreign enemies, only, are to be influenced, by the existence of a capability to do this; the US public are to be allowed or encouraged to believe that such a capability would not, in fact, be "turned on." The uncertainty conveyed to foreigners would be a bluff, a complete bluff. We would never turn such a system on, thereby incurring a risk of false alarm.

CJ's point is that even if a fully automated system has not been "switched on," the existing system is quasi-automatic and <u>is</u> in operation, creating a positive probability--i.e., an evidentially-founded, well-justified uncertainty in our own, American minds, including the President's--that the US will attack the Soviet Union in the absence of any Soviet attack on the US or any aggressive actions by the Soviets that would, if Congress or the public were to be consulted, surely be held to justify such an act of war. (This would, of course, happen in the absence of any such consultation).

This amounts to what CJ might, though he does not, call a "randomized declaration of war" by the Executive branch, unconstitutionally independently of act of Congress, where the date of the declaration is to be determined by a randomizing device. (Compare judge's opinion, p. 95).

It means that the uncertainty posed to the enemy is no bluff. We are left also uncertain, or we should be, if fully informed: even the President. The enemy might, or might not, exaggerate this uncertainty. The US public almost surely underestimates it.

By <u>operating</u> a LOWC, the Pentagon achieves a higher probability of a larger, faster, more damage-limiting response and one more likely to "prevail" if the Soviets attempt to strike first. But this is at the price of increasing the probability of a US first strike when the Soviet Union has not launched and is not about to launch a strike. And this latter effect--by making tactical or strategic warning of US attack more plausible to the Soviets in a crisis--can increase the likelihood of a Soviet preemptive attack or launch on tactical warning.

--72. "That launch on warning is with us broadly indicts the political processes that gave rise to it." True, but more explanation is needed as to why this is so. CJ mainly, in his suit, complains of violations of the Constitution and international law which ignore the question of possible benefit (which could rise to a defense of necessity: which is undoubtedly implicit in the minds of the defendants in the Defense Department, and indeed, of the courts and public).

Moreover, when CJ mentions risk, as he frequently does, he implies that the risk is prima facie unacceptable because he recognizes no conceivable benefit. This follows from his general assumptions that the weapons can practically and legitimately serve only one function, namely the deterrence of attack by threat of retaliation, and that there are clearly available alternative ways of serving this function equally or adequately well.

Senator Nunn seems to make the same assumptions in a passage CJ quotes.

"In terms of the hair-trigger, both sides are moving inexorably towards more vulnerability." [Why is this "inexorable," from Nunn's point of view? Why can't the Senate do something about it? Why has it not? Isn't it in part because Senators accept the damage-limiting mission and weapons designed for it--with "prompt hard target kill capability," like the MX and D5, and with a mission to find and destroy mobile targets like the B-2?]

" As one one side gets more weapons, the other side's ability to absorb a first strike diminishes." (Ability to absorb a first strike and then do what? Is there not enough redundancy on both sides of ability to retaliate, to pose a thoroughly adequate deterrent threat with the predicted residual forces? Is it not the ability to carry out a counterforce damage-limiting mission with forces that have been eroded by a full enemy attack that is increasingly threatened?]

As Soviet "vulnerability goes up, they get more and more a watch on attack, or launch on warning. The same thing happens here... And that means naturally to the military we've got to be ready quicker. We've got to make a decision quicker... if we believe we are under attack, before we are absolutely certain of that, we may very well launch ourself, because if we don't, we're in a situation where we lose a lot of our deterrent. That is a very dangerous situation."

[But does Nunn really assert that we would lose so much of our retaliatory force if we did not launch on tactical warning that the prospect of this would really significantly lower deterrence? He implies that this may be the case:]

"We should have a policy that does not require us to launch on warning. [I.e., require us to rely on LOW to assure adequate deterrence. But we might still LOW for other reasons, i.e., damage-limiting.] We should have the survivability with our forces to not have to launch [see previous note; we might still choose to launch] till we know we have been attacked....That means emphasis on submarines, it means emphasis on mobile missiles that are single warhead missiles--that is the direction we ought to be moving in, away from the MIRVing, away from the fixed land-based sysem. This has been the subject of considerable debate."

CJ comments: "The matter has indeed been debated for decades, with the same platitudinous counsel that abhors launch on warning, that promises forces that do not require it for survivability, that thus makes impotent criticism of launch on warning, and that for decades has not fulfilled its promises."

But why has it always worked out this way? What CJ never acknowledges, or seeks, are motives for designing and deploying weapons, and for going on LOW, that differ from the ones Nunn raises here.

I would say that it is (always, in addition to domestic Service and MIC motives) the supposed utility of the MX that leads both to its design, procurement and deployment, and then to its readiness for LOW. And this utility can only be seen, and is seen, in terms of its contribution to extended deterrence (threat of first strike)--the argument stressed by the Scowcroft Report--and its damage-limiting capability in the event of imminent or ongoing general nuclear war.

The latter contribution depends either on preemption or on LOW (since this weapons is unlikely to survive the earliest waves of Soviet attack). The "use" that will be "lost" if we don't use them as early as possible is the use of their counterforce damage-limiting capability, and that use will be lost not only if the MXs themselves are destroyed but if their targets--in particular, SS-18s--have flown already, or if the hardened Soviet command posts they threaten have already fulfilled their main functions.

These uses are not only accepted by many of Nunn's colleagues, but--if he does not share the same sense of their importance--he and others like him do not reject them enough to fight the procurement of such weapons energetically, or expose these issues to the public. Only in the important case of SDI, and earlier, ABM, did Senators like Nunn publicly criticise and strongly oppose such damage-limiting forces, or strongly support a mutual ban: not with respect to offensive missile or bomber forces.

That, I would say, is an important part of the reason why forces have emerged, so "inexorably," that create incentive either to preempt or to LOW. (Maintaining deterrence is only a public

rationalisation, though some Congressmen may have come to believe it, and super-hawks in the Pentagon who may have retained a fear of implacable Soviet inclination to launch a surprise first strike into the Eighties. Does Lowell Wood really live with the fears he described to Broad? (p. 11). Hard to say, he's such a liar. But I doubt if there are many of these.)

"All the time," CJ notes, "the possibility of simply renouncing launch on warning is basically ignored." p. 72-73. He doesn't really ask, or answer, why. Nor why Nunn does not press more energetically for the removal of MX. Or why the Trident II, D-5 missile has so many supporters, and so few opponents, as replacement for the equally deterrent but non-silo-busting C-4 missile.

(Neither of these submarine-missiles must be "used or lost," but there is great pressure to use the D-5 early, preemptively or early during attack, before its targets are "lost" to it, and its damage-limiting mission impaired. Moreover, the existence of the D-5--by posing a threat against the entire Soviet fixed land-based force--puts just as much pressure on the Soviets to launch on warning--or to preempt, against what forces they can hit, including the MX--as the MX does.

This is a footnote comment by CJ that immediately precedes the comment in the text: "Inexplicably, the group does not countenance the obvious expedient of removing the source of the risk." 72-73. By this he evidently refers to the expedient in the footnote: "simply renouncing launch on warning."

The burden of my comments above is that it is fundamentally inadequate to regard "launch on warning" as the source of the risk, any more than to see the weapons that give rise to it on both sides as the result of mindless inertia rather than of the pursuit of purposes other than deterrence.

Both of these reflect motives other than deterrence of attack on the US, motives that are quite conscious in the Pentagon (and surely in the Soviet equivalent)--though rarely discussed in public, and not at all by CJ.

I believe these strategic motives must be recognized, exposed, addressed critically in public discussion, and explicitly opposed if both LOW and the weapons and strategic aims that impel LOW and preemption are at last to be discarded.

2 August 1989
\low\Johnson.1
Dump for sections omitted from \low\Johnson. In particular, for passages that result in re-thinking by me: replaced by "corrected" versions in \low\Johnson.

What I am pointing toward is the importance of eschewing--for practical purposes, by agreement with the Soviets--damage-limiting capabilities, especially those that rely on or encourage "prompt response" or preemption, for the same reasons that it is desirable to agree mutually to forego SDI.

(The argument for mutually foregoing first-use is similar, but is much less based on the danger of evoking preemption in a crisis or LOW: except in Europe! After all, the new argument I am making for Europe is that, as in Cuba II, there is a real danger that SNF will be used preemptively, where the fear is of non-nuclear attack or capture

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NO: scratch italicized part! I have been thinking of No first use primarily outside Europe--even though the public discussion has been of Europe. Outside Europe, the expectation is of FU threats will be made or carried out against non-nuclear forces, and by US nuclear forces that are not immediately threatened by non-nuclear attack or capture. This is the historical context. So the preemptive motive does not apply.

But in Europe, the situation is the same as with strategic forces, though the pressure to "use them or lose them" comes as much from threat of non-nuclear attack or capture as from the risk of nuclear attack. (Thus, the pressure is, if anything, greater. One fears to lose one's tactical forces even before the opponent is forced to cross the nuclear threshhold. Moreover, there appears a real prospect that the limited use of tactical nuclear weapons could serve a limited military purpose, of averting battlefield disaster.

Neither of these might impress a President, but could certainly affect a field commander. Moreover, the nuclear weapons might be in the hands of allied commanders who were facing or had experienced the total occupation (and perhaps destruction, by non-nuclear attack) of their homeland.

Moreover, to say that subjective certainty is not required for Launch on Tactical Warning is to broaden this set very significantly, since evidence that points to a considerable likelihood of enemy attack while remaining somewhat ambiguous, contradictory, incomplete and "uncertain" is very much more common--in the absence of an actual attack--than evidence that appears

(falsely) "unequivocal."

The latter sort of false alarm--which is what the term "mistake" usually suggests--is also possible and remains a problem; but it would be joined as a possible source of a US-initiated strategic war by a large set of circumstances in which evidence was recognized to be more ambiguous.

The word "mistake" or "error" is less clearly appropriate in these cases, and to focus on "mistaken" or inadvertent or accidental war may be to deny or ignore the possibility, likelihood or significance of cases when strategic war may be initiated by high-level officials acting deliberately on what they understand to be uncertain evidence.

Can a judgment--based on reasonable inference from plausible evidence--that an enemy attack "may be" underway or imminent be said clearly to be "mistaken" or "false," absent some evidence or argument that such an event was "impossible"?

When a horse loses a race, all those who believed that it was "certain" to win are found to have been "mistaken." But what of those who bet on it in the belief that it "might" win, that it "had a chance"? Were they clearly "wrong," mistaken, in error, foolish, to have bet on it? Would that not depend, in part, on the odds, and the evidential basis of their beliefs or hopes?

Thus, we do not call someone necessarily foolish having bought fire insurance, even if no fire occurs during the life of the policy. Advocates of damage-limitation capabilities appeal to this analogy when they call such capabilities "insurance," "hedging against the possibility that nuclear war--despite all our efforts to deter and avert it--might occur."

The analogy can be dangerously misleading; fire insurance is not usually thought of as increasing the likelihood of fires (except in the garment district). But it conveys the real subjective state of mind of the planners and analysts, who see themselves as pursuing "complex" sets of goals or balancing serious values against each other rather than as ignoring or violating simple and obvious moral rules. Thus, see Paul Davis' argument, p. 53, that LUA is not a moral question.

I am not endorsing Davis' argument, which I think is foolish on both moral and practical grounds, for the reasons CJ gives and others. But I suspect CJ fails to understand <u>why</u> Davis takes the position he does, since Davis apparently does not mention, and CJ does not guess, the consideration of damage limitation which, I feel sure, underlies Davis' endorsement of LUA and its morality.

Since the argument about enhancing deterrence that Davis does imply looks very thin to CJ (I would agree), and since CJ never recognizes any other motive at all for LUA, he can't imagine any reason for LUA that might appear (to Davis, "reasonably") legitimate or moral, possibly counterbalancing the admitted risk of

false alarm, or of--what shall we call it?--mistaken gamble, unpremeditated, preemptive war, attack to limit damage from a feared, suspected possible enemy attack...